

HOUSE UNIT SEEKS AID OF NEW YORK OFFICER

But Red Tape Delays Appointment
of City Organized-Crime Expert
to Assassination Panel's Staff

By HOWARD BLUM

The House Select Committee on Assassination is seeking to appoint as its senior investigator a New York City police detective who is an authority on organized crime.

But the official appointment of the officer, Detective Sgt. Joseph J. Horman, is dependent upon the Police Department's finding legal precedent for a leave of absence that would continue his pension benefits and that would be counted toward his seniority.

Detective Horman's appointment to the committee investigating the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. would be the second position that the panel has filled with an authority on organized crime within a week. Last Tuesday, G. Robert Blakey, the director of the Cornell University Institute on Organized Crime,

was named the panel's chief counsel and staff director.

The appointment of Mr. Blakey and the expected appointment of Detective Horman reinforce speculation that the committee is concentrating on the suspected role of organized crime in the murder of President Kennedy.

Provisions for a Leave

"I have no theories," Detective Horman said. "I'm going down to Washington with an open mind."

"What many people don't realize," he continued, "is that there should be a broad definition for organized crime. It's not exclusive to the Mafia. For crime to be organized, you just have to prove a conspiracy exists."

The uncertainty of the appointment of the 34-year-old detective centers on his pension benefits. The benefits continue automatically under provisions of the City Charter if a police officer's leave is requested by a Mayor, a Governor or the United States Attorney General. There are no provisions in the Charter for a request made by a Congressional committee.

Representative Louis Stokes, the Ohio Democrat who heads the committee, wrote a letter to Mayor Beame on June 3, requesting that Detective Horman be granted the leave. Mayor Beame responded that under the City Charter such a request must be made by the Attorney General and directed to the Police Commissioner.

Instead of requesting Attorney General Edward H. Levi to appeal to the Police Commissioner, the committee then asked Detective Horman to petition the Commissioner directly.

Sources in the Police Department acknowledged that Commissioner Michael J. Codd had requested city lawyers to search for a legal precedent for the officer's leave. A decision is expected by Monday.